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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[*The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.*]

## A REPLY FROM THE BOSTON FLOATING HOSPITAL

DEAR EDITOR: I was very much surprised to read Miss Hall's letter, published in the January JOURNAL. In the first place, it is *not* compulsory for the nurses to wear their uniforms on the street cars, but it is allowed, so that their hours will not be any longer than possible, as conditions are such that it is necessary for us to travel over a good part of the city to get a place where the nurse can live comfortably.

Personally, I object very much to a uniform being worn on the street, and so have former superintendents. The rules for uniforms on the wards are: skirts must be at least three inches from the floor, sleeves turned back to the elbows, and an over-apron covering entire dress and *never* worn outside of the wards. Miss Hall failed to mention these things, which surely looks as though she was trying to misrepresent a hospital which granted her a diploma which she seemed quite anxious to secure.

Very truly yours,

SARAH A. EGAN, R.N.,  
Superintendent of Nurses.

## TRAINING IN SMALLPOX CASES

DEAR EDITOR: The Municipal Hospital, Philadelphia, has a ward or building for smallpox, also for other contagious diseases. The course is three and six months with, I think, a salary of \$25 a month. A short time ago the supply was not equal to the demand. If it is training in smallpox, only, that Miss Walker wants, I think the best thing she could do would be to put her name on file for that work.

About keeping food hot, I keep plates in the ovens above the range. As the food is placed on them, they are put back until the tray is ready. They are covered with a heated cover. I do not have many trays,—seventeen or eighteen.

ANNA E. BROBSON.

## TALKS TO SCHOOL CHILDREN

DEAR EDITOR: I would like to know if one of the editors or some correspondent could tell me what is expected of nurses who are asked to give talks on sex in a school. What literature could you recommend and how deeply into the subject should one go? It is a new thing here for any such talks to be given, and I feel it to be a very delicate matter. I am asked to give talks in all grades, if possible, but I doubt the advisability.

Another puzzle I would like to put before your readers is in regard to the feeding of babes when the mothers have only partial supply. I have never been able to mix natural and artificial food successfully. I only stay on a case ten days or so, and that is a pretty short time to get rules and regulations

fixed, so the mothers consult me on all occasions,—and at arm's length, one hardly knows what advice to give.

I would not be without the JOURNAL. It takes the place of intercourse with nurses, which is denied to us who are in small towns.

South Dakota.

M. T. M.

[A personal reply has been sent to this writer, but it is hoped that our readers may have suggestions to offer on both these topics which may be of value.—Ed.]

#### THE QUESTION OF LOYALTY

DEAR EDITOR: An article in the January JOURNAL on "duty" was read with much interest. I am a subscriber and interested reader of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING. In my experience of twelve years of nursing that problem of loyalty to physicians at all times has caused me much anxiety. It seems to me when doctor and nurse are co-workers, the difficulty is largely met. Would very much like to hear from others on this subject. E. R.

#### SCHOOL EPIDEMICS

DEAR EDITOR: In my position as resident nurse at a school of over four hundred girls, I find the JOURNAL a great help. It keeps me in touch with the great outside world and also serves to acquaint me with new methods of work.

I wish more nurses who are doing similar institutional work would write of their experiences, and of their methods of preventing epidemics of grippe, tonsillitis, etc. We have seldom more than one or two cases a year of measles, mumps, or scarlet fever, but I cannot control the others, probably because the girls do not consider them serious enough to be reported. C. M. D.

#### CARE OF MALE PATIENTS

DEAR EDITOR: Some time before I ever studied nursing, I considered it a privilege to get hold of a copy of the JOURNAL and peruse it, and now that I am a full fledged nurse I would not like to do without it. The letter department is my particular delight, and when a new number arrives I take a general survey of the contents, and then settle down to enjoy a leisurely reading of the letters.

I have followed with the greatest interest the discussions on the care of male patients, and feel that it is one of vital interest to us all as nurses. On such a subject there cannot but be differences of opinion, and I would like to say to T. M. M. in the September JOURNAL, that I do not think she is justified in her comparison when she puts the supposititious case of a male nurse taking care of a woman patient, on a level of comparison with that of a woman caring for a man; and I am sure many others must feel as I do. To me the comparison seems absolutely inadmissible, because men are *not* the natural *mothers* of the race, and women *are*. This fact seems to me to put the two propositions as far apart as the ends of the earth. The mother instinct in every normal woman can always do for either sex, purely and nobly, whatever must be done, with only the desire uppermost in her mind to relieve and help, just as she would tend and care for a helpless little one. This is her God-given instinct, her God-given profession, and let no one belittle these.

However, I want to make my position entirely clear by saying that I do